

## Duxbury Clipper

Founded by John and Roberta Cutler, 1950

### Editorial Page

## Gimme Shelter

We are pleased to see that a group of local citizens has banded together to raise the town's consciousness to the need a new animal control shelter and raise the money to make it happen.

Parade goers this July 4th got an eye opener to the current conditions when they saw the Animal Shelter Foundation's float, a flatbed bearing a small penned in area with a sign reading: "This float is bigger than your current animal shelter."

The present facility behind the town garage has been called "an animal Alcatraz" by one member of the organization.

While that might be stretching it a bit, we concede that conditions at the present 14' by 16' shelter appear inadequate to meet the demand.

Animal Control Officer Halley Dee Parlin and her assistant, Patty Schupp, have done their homework researching other municipal facilities. Their findings show that fundraising efforts play a direct part in the construction of many town shelters.

The newly formed foundation grew from a nucleus of animal lovers who were appalled at the inadequacy of the town shelter. The present facility has two, three by four foot dog runs, a kitty condo and office space all in one room. Located among the town's busy highway department trucks and equipment near the town garage, visitors must often dodge traffic to access the shelter. There are no bathroom facilities or file storage or computer area and no way to wash down runs in the winter.

On any given day, the shelter can house up to eight dogs at one time. Parlin makes due by stacking dog crates and using folding cages for additional animals jammed into the cramped space.

Fostering dogs to Duxbury residents has become a regular practice due to tight quarters and a state imposed 10 day limit for pets in animal shelters before adoption measures are required.

The proposed plans include a 38 by 44 foot handicap accessible shelter which will include a bathroom, nine four by 12 foot dog runs with one used as an isolation pen for strays brought in at night. The new shelter would have indoor runs to reduce noise and allow dogs to exercise during inclement weather. Also planned are a gated fence area, an outdoor enclosure for cats, an exercise pen, and a larger outdoor area where community obedience classes and training could occur.

The \$45,000 in funds raised so far including the \$10,000 appropriated at town meeting will help launch the project but more funds are needed to fully meet construction and equipment costs. Just as important are the "in kind" and other donated services and supplies which will defray the estimated \$100,000 to build the new shelter from the ground up. Marshfield, for example, was able to cover an estimated \$50,000 worth of shelter costs with "in kind" and donated goods and services.

We support this effort and commend citizens for trying to keep costs down and take the burden off taxpayers, who are asked to cover a laundry list of town projects and capital expenditures each year.

Anyone interested in helping the cause can do so through the Duxbury Animal Shelter Foundation. P.O. Box 2422, Duxbury, MA. 02331.